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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 137  
By Bowers

A RESOLUTION relative to the establishment of a prescription drug program for Medicare beneficiaries.

WHEREAS, when the Medicare program was established thirty-five (35) years ago, its benefits were based on private sector health care coverage, which rarely included prescription drugs; and

WHEREAS, today, virtually all private sector health care plans include coverage for prescription drugs, while Medicare does not; and

WHEREAS, Medicare beneficiaries' current prescription drug coverage options are often expensive and unreliable; as a result, three (3) out of five (5) Medicare beneficiaries lack decent, dependable coverage for their prescription drug costs, and more than one-third (1/3) have no coverage at all; and

WHEREAS, the absence of this critical benefit in the Medicare program is particularly serious due to the important role prescription medications play in patient care today, especially for senior citizens; and

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WHEREAS, all Medicare beneficiaries are in dire need of affordable coverage and financial protection as prescription drug costs escalate at double-digit rates; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That this General Assembly hereby memorializes the United States Congress to enact legislation establishing a universal, voluntary prescription drug benefit as a component of the Medicare program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That it is the sense of this General Assembly that any prescription drug benefits established by Congress for Medicare beneficiaries should complement and enhance state-funded pharmaceutical assistance programs already in operation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That enrolled copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Speaker and the Clerk of the United States House of Representatives; the President and Secretary of the United States Senate; and each member of Tennessee's Congressional delegation.